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ABSTRACT

First-year teachers' perceptions of the helpfulness of their teacher mentoring experiences during their induction into the profession were investigated in this study. It was found that most novice teachers perceived their mentoring experiences to be helpful; however, they rated other professionals in their school districts as being more helpful in aiding their transition into teaching than their formally assigned mentor teachers. The novice elementary teachers rated their building principals as being more helpful, and the novice secondary teachers rated other teacher colleagues as being more helpful than the mentor teachers. The areas of mentoring assistance found to be most valued by the neophyte teachers were in meeting school requirements and procedures, handling pupil discipline, and dealing with other professionals. Most of the first-year teachers reported spending considerable amounts of time with their teacher mentors (15 or more hours). The less well-prepared novice teachers spent less time with their mentor teachers and rated their principals as being more helpful in facilitating their transition into the profession than did the better prepared first-year teachers. (Author)

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Teacher Mentor Induction Programs: An Assessment by First-Year Teachers

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Abstract

First-year teachers' perceptions of the helpfulness of their teacher mentoring experiences during their induction into the profession were investigated in this study. It was found that most novice teachers perceived their mentoring experiences to be helpful; however, they rated other professionals in their school districts as being more helpful in aiding their transition into teaching than their formally assigned mentor teachers. The novice elementary teachers rated their building principals as being more helpful, and the novice secondary teachers rated other teacher colleagues as being more helpful than the mentor teachers. The areas of mentoring assistance found to be most valued by the neophyte teachers were in meeting school requirements and procedures, handling pupil discipline, and dealing with other professionals. Most of the first-year teachers reported spending considerable amounts of time during the academic year with their teacher mentors (15 or more hours). The less well prepared novice teachers spent less time with their mentor teachers and rated their principals as being more helpful in facilitating their transition into the profession than did the better prepared first-year teachers.

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Teacher Mentor Induction Programs: An Assessment by First-Year Teachers

The transition of prospective teachers into the teaching profession has been variously described in the educational literature as a period of "reality shock," as a "trial by fire," and as a "sink or swim" process. Teachers, themselves, have described this transition period as generating emotions from feelings of inadequacy to feelings of blind panic. Further, reports of unusually high numbers of problems experienced during the first year of teaching as compared to subsequent years and data indicating that many neophyte teachers leave the profession during or at the end of their first year of teaching have been well documented in the research literature (Veenman, 1984).

Neither the knowledge that novice teachers do experience many difficulties during their transition into the teaching profession nor the concept of induction programs to facilitate this transition, however, are new to the educational literature. Jacknicke and Samiroden (1989) have traced the origins of the discussion of teacher internships designed to facilitate the transition into the teaching profession to at least as early as 1963. Just in recent years, however, has the educational profession broadly embraced these transition programs and have such programs been legislated in a number of states (Brooks, 1987). Further, only recently have these novice teacher transition programs been studied extensively (Doyle, 1985).

Sociologists remind us that career transition difficulties are not unique to the teaching profession. Professionals in many fields rate the value of their early "trial by fire" transition experiences as being vastly superior to their formal education. Several years ago Lortie (1975) described the phenomenon of teachers crediting field experiences rather than their formal training for their successful transition into teaching (and this phenomenon has been documented in several other studies, e.g., Pigge, 1978), and he enumerated several factors within the teaching profession which compound difficulties during the career induction process. Louis (1980), however, has identified and described parallel conditions and problems associated with professional career induction into any unfamiliar organizational setting such as high resignation rates, unrealistic expectations, and various newcomer dysfunctional coping efforts.

Relatedly, Buchmann and Schwille (1983) have argued very cogently that experience is not necessarily the best teacher either in career transitions or at other times in one's life through illustrating numerous "traps" to the illusion of experience as being the master teacher. For example, they noted that if seeing is believing, gullibility is the result (e.g., the sun moving around the earth, air as an empty nothingness, etc.).

Research published in the 1980's pertaining to novice teachers' transition into teaching provides some evidence about the specific types of difficulties experienced by neophyte teachers. This evidence generally suggests that the types of problems which confront beginning

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teachers are not unique to first-year teachers. Rather, these problems are likely to occur at any time in the teaching profession, but they are likely to occur less frequently and to be felt less intensely at later points in teachers' careers. These studies also suggest that we are developing a better understanding of the psychological barriers that limit the quality of interactions between beginning and experienced teachers (Marso and Pigge [1987]; Veenman [1984]; Wildman, Magliaro, Niles, McLaughlin, and Dull, [1988]).

Other recent research of neophyte teachers' transition into the profession suggests why a formalized "coaching" experience is commonly deemed necessary to facilitate their transition (Moffett, St. John, and Isken, 1987; Newberry, 1978). Still other research suggests that we are developing an awareness of the subtle differences between beginning and experienced teachers' responses to the same types of classroom problems (Fogarty, Wang, and Creek, 1983). And additionally, this recent research suggests that we now better understand the specific nature of the problems most commonly experienced by novice teachers (Cruickshank, 1981; Grant and Zeichner, 1981; Hall, 1982; Quaglia and Rog, 1989).

Purpose

The purpose of this study was to determine first-year teachers' perceptions of the value or helpfulness of their employing school districts' formal teacher mentoring programs. More specifically this study was designed to obtain the novice teachers' assessments of the mentoring experiences provided by the formally assigned mentor teachers, to identify what types of mentoring assistance were provided for them, to determine what types of mentoring assistance were felt to be most helpful in their transition into teaching, and to determine whether or not the mentor teachers were perceived as being more, about the same, or less helpful in aiding the novice teachers' transition into teaching when compared to the aid given by their building principals, teacher supervisors, and other teacher colleagues.

Method

The subjects for this study were comprised of all teacher candidates entering the teacher preparation program at Bowling Green State University during the calendar year of 1985 and who were completing their first year of full-time teaching in Ohio during the spring of 1989. A total of 126 teachers were identified who met these criteria, and usable survey assessment forms were obtained from 75 of these individuals resulting in a 60% response rate. Of these respondents 42 were teaching in the elementary grades and 33 in the secondary grades, and 18 of these respondents described their employing school district as being in an urban setting, 22 as being in a rural setting, and 35 as being in a suburban setting.

The assessment instrument completed by the first-year teachers consisted of 13 items. The first item requested the novice teachers to indicate whether or not their employing school districts had formally designated an experienced teacher (mentor teacher) as having

the responsibility of facilitating their progress through their first year of teaching. A second item requested the neophyte teachers to estimate the number of hours of assistance provided by their mentor teachers during the school year. Three additional items directed the first-year teachers to rate the perceived helpfulness of their building principals, their teacher supervisors, and their other teacher colleagues in aiding their transition into teaching as compared to the helpfulness of their mentor teachers. These three ratings were each completed on a seven-point continuum scale with descriptive and numerical values from much less helpful than their mentor teacher (1) to much more helpful than their mentor teacher (7).

The next seven assessment items requested the first-year teachers to rate to what extent their mentor teachers were helpful in aiding their progress during their first year of teaching in the following areas of teacher responsibility: preparation of lessons, overall classroom management, handling pupil discipline, meeting school requirements and procedures, dealing with other professionals, dealing with parents, and an "other" area that the neophyte teachers, themselves, might choose to identify. Each of these seven items was responded to on a seven-point continuum scale with descriptive and numerical values from not helpful (1) to very helpful (7). The last of the 13 items requested the novice teachers' overall evaluation of the helpfulness of the formal mentoring experience provided by their employing school district. This item was also responded to on a seven-point continuum scale with descriptive and numerical values from a waste of time (1) to very effective (7).

Findings

Of the 75 first-year teachers responding to the survey instrument, just 27 (35%) indicated that their employing school district had assigned an experienced teacher to function in the role of a formal mentor to aid their progress through their first year of teaching. Of these 27 novice teachers, 15 reported being assigned to teach in the secondary grades, and 12 reported being assigned to the elementary grades. It is presumed that those 48 first-year teachers indicating that their employing school district had not assigned an experienced teacher to serve as their formal teacher mentor had experienced an assistance/induction program which did not include the use of formal mentor teachers, for the State had mandated that school districts provide a formal assistance program to facilitate the transition of first-year teachers into teaching in their districts beginning with the 1988-89 academic year.

Time with Mentor

Approximately two-thirds of the 27 novice teachers reported receiving 10 or more hours of assistance from their assigned mentor teacher during the academic year, and approximately 30% reported receiving 25 or more hours of assistance. This data indicates that many of the teacher mentors expended considerable amounts of time in providing assistance to the novice teachers as shown on Table 1.

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Insert Table 1 about here
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The mean number of hours of reported mentor teachers' assistance during the school year for all teachers was 14.9 hours. (Median values on the reporting scale with 25 as the high median value were used to determine means.) The elementary grade first-year teachers reported having spent somewhat more time with their mentors than did the secondary grade novice teachers (rating scale means of 16.8 and 13.4, respectfully).

Relative Mentor Helpfulness

In regards to the neophyte teachers' ratings of the helpfulness of other professionals when compared to their mentor teachers, the total group of 27 first-year teachers rated building principals and teacher supervisors as being less helpful, but other teacher colleagues as being somewhat more helpful (means of 3.59, 3.19, and 4.26, respectively, from the seven-point rating scale).

When the first-year teachers' ratings were grouped by their grade level assignments, however, it became apparent that the elementary and secondary novice teachers differed in their perceptions of the relative helpfulness of their principals, supervisors, and other teacher colleagues when compared to the helpfulness of the mentor teachers. The elementary teachers' ratings of the assistance received during their first year of teaching indicate that their building principals were perceived as being more helpful than their mentor teachers, that other teacher colleagues were perceived to be about as helpful, and that their teacher supervisors were perceived to be less helpful than their mentor teachers (means of 4.67, 4.00, and 3.50, respectively, on the seven-point rating scale). In contrast, the secondary teachers rated other teacher colleagues as being more helpful and their principals and supervisors as being less helpful than their mentor teachers (means of 4.47, 2.73, and 3.14 as shown on Table 2).

The novice elementary teachers' ratings of the helpfulness of their building principals as compared to the helpfulness of their teacher mentors resulted in a mean of 4.67 which is significantly higher than the comparable rating mean of 2.73 for the first-year secondary teachers ($t = 3.13$, $p = .004$). The secondary and the elementary teachers did not, however, differ significantly from one another in their average ratings of the helpfulness of either their teacher supervisors or other teacher colleagues in contrast to the helpfulness of their mentor teachers. A summary of the first-year teachers' ratings of the helpfulness of their principals, supervisors, and other teacher colleagues as compared to the helpfulness of their mentor teachers is presented on Table 2.

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Insert Table 2 about here
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Areas of Mentor Helpfulness

The novice teachers assigned to the elementary grades rated the helpfulness of their mentor teachers somewhat higher than did those novice teachers assigned to the secondary grades in each of the six areas of assistance assessed. Both the elementary and secondary level first-year teachers, however, rated mentor assistance as being most helpful in meeting school requirements and procedures. The helpfulness rank orders for the elementary and secondary mean ratings of the areas of mentor assistance differed, however, for each of the other five areas of assistance enumerated on the survey instrument (see Table 3).

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Insert Table 3 about here
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The novice teachers in the elementary grades, like the novice teachers at the secondary level, rated mentor assistance in meeting school requirements and procedures (means of 5.25 and 4.89, respectively) to be the most helpful of the six assistance areas assessed. This area of assistance was followed closely by the elementary teachers' ratings of the helpfulness of mentor teachers' assistance related to their handling pupil discipline and dealing with parents with rating means of 5.17 and 4.83, respectively. The novice elementary teachers rated equally the helpfulness of their mentors in the assistance areas of preparation of lessons ($\bar{X}$ = 4.50) and dealing with other professionals ($\bar{X}$ = 4.50), and they rated mentor helpfulness in overall class management lowest of the six areas of assistance ($\bar{X}$ = 4.42).

As previously noted, neophyte secondary teachers, like the neophyte elementary grade teachers, rated as most helpful mentor teacherss' assistance related to their meeting school requirements and procedures ($\bar{X}$ = 4.89). This area of assistance was followed by the secondary teachers' ratings of mentor helpfulness to them in dealing with other professionals ($\bar{X}$ = 4.07), overall classroom management ($\bar{X}$ = 3.86), handling pupil discipline ($\bar{X}$ = 3.73), dealing with parents ($\bar{X}$ = 3.53), and assistance in preparing lessons ($\bar{X}$ = 3.00).

The secondary and elementary novice teachers differed significantly from one another in their ratings of mentor teachers' helpfulness in the area of preparation of lessons (secondary $\bar{X}$ = 3.00, elementary $\bar{X}$ = 4.50, $t = 2.13$, $p = .04$), and the mean difference between these two groups of first-year teachers approached significance for their ratings of their mentors' assistance in handling pupil discipline (secondary $\bar{X}$ = 3.73, elementary $\bar{X}$ = 5.17, $t = 1.88$, $p = .07$). The rating means for the elementary and secondary novice teachers did not differ significantly from one another for their ratings of their mentors' helpfulness in the other assistance areas as enumerated on Table 3.

The novice teachers varied considerably one from the other in their ratings of the helpfulness of their teacher mentors in the six

selected areas of assistance. The very highest and lowest scale points (one and seven) were selected by at least one neophyte teacher in each of the areas of mentor assistance. This diversity in the first-year teachers' ratings of the helpfulness of their mentor teachers within the specific assistance areas most likely indicates that the mentors responded to areas of need expressed by the individual novice teachers rather than attempting to provide a predetermined range of assistance. Thus, one might argue that it would be more appropriate to interpret these findings as indicating areas where the novice teachers requested or needed assistance rather than indicating that mentor teachers are more or less proficient in providing help to novice teachers in certain areas of assistance.

Overall Mentor Effectiveness

As data in Table 4 indicate, the novice elementary teachers provided somewhat higher ratings of the overall helpfulness of their mentoring experience than did the secondary level first-year teachers; this was also the case for all other survey items as shown in Table 3. Just six or approximately 22% of the total group of first-year teachers (only one of the elementary teachers) rated the assistance provided by their mentors below the midpoint of four on the seven-point scale; whereas 13 or nearly 50% of the total group of beginning teachers rated the overall helpfulness of their mentors at six or seven at the "very effective" end of the rating scale. The evaluative rating means related to the assistance provided by the mentor teachers for the elementary, secondary, and total group of first-year teachers were 5.50, 4.27, and 4.81, respectively, as reported in Table 4. The difference between the secondary and elementary means is not statistically significant.

The diversity (use of scale points one through seven) of the beginning teachers' ratings of their overall mentoring experience again reveals the neophyte teachers' varied perceptions of the helpfulness of the teacher mentors. Indeed, nearly two-thirds of the novice teachers rated their mentors as being very helpful (scale points of 5, 6, or 7), but on the other hand nearly one-fourth rated the assistance provided by their mentor teachers as not being very helpful (scale points of 1, 2, or 3). The novice secondary level teachers appeared to be more diverse in their perceptions of the helpfulness of their mentors than were the elementary first-year teachers. None of the novice elementary level teachers rated the helpfulness of their mentoring experience as a waste of time (scale point of one); whereas five (33%) of the novice secondary level teachers rated their overall mentoring experience as being a waste of time (scale point of one).

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Insert Table 4 about here
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Level of Preparation of Novice Teachers and Mentor Ratings

To determine whether or not the degree of preparation of the first-year teachers might have had some influence upon their ratings of their mentoring experience, these 27 novice teachers with mentors were rank ordered on the basis of their university supervisors' ratings of their performance as student teachers. Those beginning teachers ranked in the top 10 and those ranked in the bottom 10 of the group of 27 were then classified as being more well and less well prepared, respectively, for their transition into teaching.

The comparisons of the more well prepared with the less well prepared novice teachers' ratings of their mentoring experiences revealed three significant differences. The more well prepared beginning teachers reported having spent significantly more hours of time with their mentor teachers (an average of approximately 18 hours) than did the less well prepared beginning teachers (an average of approximately seven hours) resulting in a t value of 3.01 which is significant at the $p = .008$. And perhaps because of more time spent with their mentor teachers, the more well prepared beginning teachers rated their building principals as being less helpful than their mentor teachers ($\bar{X} = 2.50$); whereas the less well prepared novice teachers perhaps because of having spent less time with their mentor teachers rated their principals to be more helpful than their teacher mentors ($\bar{X} = 4.30$) resulting in a significant difference between these two rating means ($t = 2.27$, $p = .04$).

Additionally, and perhaps again as a consequence of the increased time spent with their mentor teachers, the more well prepared beginning teachers rated their mentor teachers' helpfulness in the assistance area of meeting school requirements and procedures higher ($\bar{X} = 6.10$) than did the less well prepared neophyte teachers ($\bar{X} = 2.80$). These two rating means are different ($t = 2.80$) at the $p = .02$ significance level.

Summary and Discussion

Approximately 36% of the 75 first-year teachers responding to the survey reported that their employing school districts formally designated mentor teachers to assist them during their first year of teaching. The typical first-year teacher reported receiving approximately 15 hours of assistance from his/her mentor with the neophyte elementary grade level teachers reporting having spent somewhat more time with their mentors than did the secondary level teachers.

The total group of novice elementary and secondary teachers rated their mentoring experience as being helpful; however they rated other professionals in their employing school districts as being more helpful than their mentor teachers. Overall, the elementary level teachers rated their building principals as being more helpful than their mentor teachers, and they rated their other teacher colleagues and their supervisors as being approximately as helpful and somewhat less helpful, respectively, than their mentor teachers in facilitating

their induction into the teaching profession. In contrast, the group of secondary teachers rated their teacher colleagues as being more helpful to their induction into teaching than their mentor teachers, and they rated their supervisors and principals to be somewhat less helpful and much less helpful, respectively, than their mentor teachers.

The assistance provided by the mentor teachers was rated by the beginning elementary and secondary grade groups of teachers as being most helpful in assisting them in meeting school requirements and procedures. The secondary and elementary teachers, however, differed from one another in their relative rating levels of their mentor teachers' helpfulness in the other enumerated areas of assistance. For example, the novice elementary grade level teachers rated very highly their mentor teachers' helpfulness to them in their handling pupil discipline and in dealing with parents. In contrast the novice secondary teachers rated highly their mentor teachers' helpfulness to them in their dealing with other professionals and in providing overall classroom management.

The observed differences between the first-year elementary and secondary teachers' ratings of various areas of mentor teachers' assistance may be simply an artifact of the differences in the organizational structures and in the first-year teachers' responsibilities inherent in elementary and secondary school settings. For example, elementary grade teachers typically need to prepare lessons in more subject areas than do secondary teachers; therefore the novice elementary teachers could more likely benefit from and would more likely seek this type of assistance from their mentor teachers as compared to the novice secondary teachers. Similarly, elementary level teachers typically tend to work more closely with parents than do secondary level teachers; therefore, novice elementary teachers would more likely seek and benefit from this type of assistance from their mentor teachers as compared to the novice secondary teachers.

The fact that both the elementary and secondary level neophyte teachers rated their mentor teachers as being most helpful in the area of meeting school requirements and procedures might be expected as all novice teachers would presumably be equally uninformed about the specific procedures required and related expectations in a school district new to them. The first-year teachers' high ratings of the helpfulness of their mentor teachers in this area would also appear to support the contention of Louis (1980) that career transitions into unfamiliar organizations precipitate employee difficulties. The novice teachers' relatively high ratings of the helpfulness of their mentor teachers in classroom management and in handling pupil discipline also might be expected in light of the frequency of these types of problems reported by other beginning teachers (Veenman, 1984).

The finding of novice secondary teachers' reporting lower ratings of the helpfulness of their principals as opposed to novice elementary grade level teacher ratings of the helpfulness of their principals

appears to be consistent with the findings of Quaglia and Rog (1989). These researchers reported a limited contact between first-year teachers and administrators in larger schools, and they reported secondary teachers' perceptions of principals as being foremost teacher evaluators and only secondarily as sources of teacher assistance.

Furthermore, Grant and Zeichner (1981) in their study of beginning teachers (who were not participating in a formal teacher induction program) reported novice teachers' preference for informal peer mentoring relationships as opposed to formal mentoring relationship established by their building principals. These researchers hypothesized that novice teachers may suspect the presence of an evaluation element in the principal established mentor relationships and consequently that the novice teachers may not fully trust the principal designated mentor.

Thus, one might speculate that the novice secondary teachers' likely limited contact with their principals and their probable perception of principals as being foremost evaluators may have lead to a lack of trust of the principal designated mentors which may explain why the beginning secondary teachers in the present study rated the helpfulness of other teacher colleagues higher than the helpfulness of their mentor teachers and their building principals.

The novice teachers' much higher ratings of the helpfulness of elementary as opposed to secondary principals in the present study is consistent with the findings of a study reported by Marso and Pigge (1987). They also found that neophyte elementary level teachers (who were not participating in formal induction programs) reported much higher ratings of principal assistance than did their secondary counterparts. Collectively, the findings from the present study and from those studies reviewed would suggest that mentor teachers at the secondary level might be perceived as being more helpful to first-year teachers if the mentor teachers are viewed by the first-year teachers as functioning independently from the building principal and from the principal's role as teacher evaluator.

In summation, the majority of these novice teachers provided positive ratings of the helpfulness of their formally assigned mentors. Further, these novice teachers reported that the formal mentors expended considerable time in providing assistance to them and that this assistance was provided in a wide variety of areas. Orientation to the requirements and practices of the employing school district was rated by the first-year teachers as being the area in which their mentors were most helpful.

Other professionals in addition to the formal teacher mentors clearly played a significant role in the transition of these beginning teachers. The elementary level teachers rated the helpfulness of their building principals higher than they rated the helpfulness of their mentors, and the secondary teachers rated the helpfulness of other teacher colleagues higher than they rated their mentor teachers. Relatedly, not all of the novice teachers rated their mentor teachers

as being helpful as approximately one out of three of the beginning secondary teachers reported that their overall mentoring experience was a waste of time.

The level of preparation of the beginning teachers was found to be related to their ratings of several elements of their mentoring experience. Data collected from these neophyte teachers suggested that building principals gave relatively more attention to the less well prepared first-year teachers; it appeared that principals, themselves, may assume responsibilities for the less well prepared beginning teachers that otherwise might be assumed by their mentor teachers. Conversely, the more well prepared beginning teachers appeared to spend more time with their mentor teachers than did the less well prepared first-year teachers. These findings related to the level of preparation of the first-year teachers, concomitant with the diversity found in the novice teachers' ratings of the helpfulness of their mentoring experiences, the novice teachers' reports that others were more helpful to their progress than were their mentor teachers, and the fact that fully one-third of the novice secondary teachers perceived their mentoring experience to be a waste of time suggest that an adequate transition program for novice teachers requires support beyond that provided by formally designated teacher mentors.

A formal teacher mentoring relationship is commonly considered an essential element in a new teacher induction program (Moffett, St. John, and Isken, 1987), and certainly, the findings from the present study do not refute this belief. The present findings clearly do suggest, however, that the presence of a formally designated mentor teacher alone is unlikely to be sufficient to meet the induction needs of all first-year teachers. Further, the low percentage of new teacher induction programs with a formal mentor teacher component (36%) found in the school districts employing this sample of first-year teachers suggests that school administrators may not perceive formal mentor teachers to be an essential element of teacher induction programs despite the heavy emphasis being given to the teacher mentoring programs and approaches in the current teacher induction literature.

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Table 1

Hours of Teacher Mentoring Assistance Reported by Elementary and Secondary Grade Novice Teachers During Their First Year of Teaching

	2 hrs. or less (1)		3-5 hrs. (2)		6-9 hrs. (3)		10-15 hrs. (4)		16-25 hrs. (5)		25 hrs. or more (6)			
Respondents	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	Mean Hours
Elementary	0	0	1	8	2	17	2	17	4	33	3	25	12	16.8
Secondary	3	20	3	20	1	7	1	7	2	13	5	33	15	13.4
Total	3	11	4	15	3	11	3	11	6	22	8	30	27	14.9

Table 2

Elementary and Secondary First-Year Teachers' Ratings of the Helpfulness of Building Principals, Teacher Supervisors, and Other Teacher Colleagues as Compared to Assigned Teacher Mentors

	Much Less Helpful than Mentor(s) (1)		(2)		(3)		(4)		(5)		Much More Helpful than Mentor(s) (6)		(7)			Rating
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	Mean
Building Principals																
Elementary	1	8	0	0	1	8	4	33	2	17	2	17	2	17	12	4.67*
Secondary	3	20	5	33	3	20	2	13	1	7	1	7	0	0	15	2.73*
Total	4	15	5	19	4	15	6	22	3	11	3	11	2	7	27	3.59
Teacher Supervisors																
Elementary	1	8	3	25	2	17	2	17	3	25	1	8	0	0	12	3.50
Secondary	2	13	3	20	2	13	5	33	2	13	0	0	1	7	15	3.14
Total	3	11	5	19	4	15	6	22	3	11	3	11	2	7	27	3.19
Other Teacher Colleagues																
Elementary	0	0	1	8	4	33	4	33	1	8	1	8	1	8	12	4.00
Secondary	0	0	3	20	2	13	5	33	0	0	0	0	5	33	15	4.47
Total	0	0	4	15	6	22	9	33	1	4	1	4	6	22	27	4.26

* These rating means are statistically different from one another, $t = 3.13$, $p = .004$.

Table 3

Elementary and Secondary First-Year Teachers' Ratings of Mentor Teacher Helpfulness in Six Assistance Areas

Area of Assistance	Group	Not Helpful (1) N	%	(2) N	%	(3) N	%	(4) N	%	(5) N	%	(6) N	%	Very Helpful (7) N	%	Rating Mean	Rank of Group Mean
Preparation of lessons	Elem.	1	8	0	0	3	25	2	17	3	25	0	0	3	25	4.50*	4.5
	Sec.	4	24	4	24	0	0	3	20	3	20	1	7	0	0	3.00*	6
	Total	5	19	4	15	3	11	5	19	6	22	1	4	3	11	3.67	6
Overall classroom management	Elem.	0	0	1	8	2	17	5	42	1	8	1	8	2	17	4.42	6
	Sec.	4	24	1	7	1	7	4	24	0	0	2	13	3	20	3.86	3
	Total	4	15	2	7	3	11	9	33	1	4	3	11	5	19	4.11	4.5
Handling pupil discipline	Elem.	0	0	1	8	0	0	3	25	3	25	2	17	3	25	5.17**	2
	Sec.	4	24	1	7	2	13	3	20	0	0	3	20	2	13	3.73**	4
	Total	4	15	2	7	2	7	6	22	3	11	5	19	5	19	4.37	2
Meeting school requirements and procedures	Elem.	0	0	1	8	0	0	3	25	2	17	3	25	3	25	5.25	1
	Sec.	2	13	0	0	2	13	2	13	2	13	2	13	5	33	4.89	1
	Total	2	7	1	4	2	7	5	19	4	15	5	19	8	30	5.04	1
Dealing with other professionals	Elem.	0	0	1	8	3	25	2	17	3	25	1	8	2	17	4.50	4.5
	Sec.	4	24	1	7	1	7	1	7	3	20	2	13	3	20	4.07	2
	Total	4	15	2	7	4	15	3	11	6	22	3	11	5	19	4.26	3
Dealing with parents	Elem.	1	8	0	0	1	8	3	25	3	25	1	8	3	25	4.83	3
	Sec.	5	33	1	7	0	0	5	33	0	0	2	13	2	13	3.55	5
	Total	6	22	1	4	1	4	8	30	3	11	3	11	5	19	4.11	4.5

* These rating means differed significantly, t = 2.13, p = .04.

** The difference between these rating means was significant at p = .07 level (t = 1.88).

Table 4

Elementary and Secondary First-Year Teachers' Ratings of the Overall Helpfulness of Their Formal Mentor Teachers

	Waste of Time												Very Effective			
Teacher	(1)		(2)		(3)		(4)		(5)		(6)		(7)			Rating
Respondents	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	Mean
Elementary	0	0	0	0	1	8	2	17	2	17	4	33	3	25	12	5.50
Secondary	5	33	0	0	0	0	2	13	2	13	1	7	5	33	15	4.27
Total	5	19	0	0	1	4	4	15	4	15	5	19	8	30	27	4.81